

# **GUIDELINES FOR INCLUSION OF WOMEN, MINORITIES, AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN NIH-SUPPORTED CONFERENCE GRANTS**

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**NOTICE:** NOT-OD-03-066

National Institutes of Health (NIH)

## **INTRODUCTION**

This Notice provides updated policy regarding the inclusion of women, minorities, and persons with disabilities in conference grants supported by the National Institutes of Health (NIH). It also provides updated Institute and Center (IC) contact information. The previous guidelines were issued in the NIH GUIDE on April 28, 1995, at <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT95-123.html>. These guidelines apply to both intramural and extramural programs.

## **BACKGROUND**

The NIH recognizes the value of supporting scientific meetings, conferences, and workshops that are relevant to its scientific mission and to public health. In addition, NIH affirms that the value of scientific meetings is enhanced by including participants from all segments of the scientific population and, when appropriate, members of the lay community, in both the planning and conduct of such meetings.

The NIH Revitalization Act (P.L. 103-43, Section 206), which adds section 402(b) to the Public Health Service Act, requires that NIH, "in conducting and supporting programs for research, research training, recruitment, and other activities, provide for an increase in the number of women and individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds (including racial and ethnic minorities) in the fields of biomedical and behavioral research." In addition, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 require reasonable accommodations to be provided to individuals with disabilities.

## **POLICY**

It is NIH policy that organizers of scientific meetings should make a concerted effort to achieve appropriate representation of women, racial/ethnic minorities, and persons with disabilities, and other individuals who have been traditionally underrepresented in science, in all NIH sponsored and/or supported scientific meetings. The plans to seek appropriate representation should be specified during selection of organizing committees, speakers, and other invited participants, such as session chairs and panel discussants. In addition, efforts should be made to encourage attendance by women, minorities, and persons with disabilities at all NIH sponsored and/or supported scientific meetings as a means of increasing their participation in the particular scientific field. The quality of the

proposed plans to seek appropriate representation will be an evaluation criterion used during the scientific and technical merit review of requests for funding to support scientific meetings. A "scientific meeting" is defined as a gathering, symposium, seminar, workshop, or any other organized, formal conference where persons assemble to coordinate, exchange, and disseminate information or to explore or clarify a defined subject, problem, or area of knowledge. "Appropriate representation" means representation based on the availability of scientists from these groups known to be working in a particular field of biomedical or behavioral research.

This policy shall apply to all domestic or international scientific meetings sponsored by and/or receiving support from the NIH. The policy includes meetings initiated by the NIH's extramural and intramural programs, as well as those funded through contracts, or investigator-initiated grants or cooperative agreements. Reasonable efforts must be made, as well, to fulfill the goals of this policy for single seminars sponsored by NIH laboratories or extramural programs.

NIH staff will work with applicants as necessary to assist them in complying with this policy. It is the responsibility of the IC Directors to assure compliance with this policy. The NIH Director will assure that all extramural and intramural programs comply with this policy.

All NIH sponsored and/or supported conferences must be held at accessible sites, as outlined by section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and, as applicable, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Conference registration materials should provide a questionnaire that will allow participants with disabilities to voluntarily identify any special needs, so that conference organizers can make plans to accommodate these needs.

NIH uses the Office of Management and Budget definitions provided in Directive Number 15, as revised on October 30, 1997, for racial and ethnic categories for the purposes of this policy, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/fedreg/ombdir15.html>. (For additional information, refer to the NIH link, [http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/women\\_min/women\\_min.htm](http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/women_min/women_min.htm)). The categories in this classification are social-political constructs and should not be interpreted as anthropological in nature. This directive defines the minimum standards for maintaining, collecting, and presenting data on race and ethnicity for all Federal reporting. NIH is required to use these definitions to allow comparisons to other federal databases, especially the census and national health databases. There are two ethnic categories -- Hispanic or Latino and Not Hispanic or Latino -- and five racial categories -- American Indian or Alaskan Native, Asian, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, and White. Whites are defined as the majority group; the remaining categories comprise the racial/ethnic minorities. The classification of an individual is by self-identification. A person with a disability means any person who (a) has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more of such person's major life

activities; (b) has a record of such an impairment; or (c) is regarded as having such an impairment, as described under section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

Conference Grants should not be coded for human subjects as conferees are not "human subjects" and conferences are not "research" as defined by the regulations  
<http://ohrp.osophs.dhhs.gov/humansubjects/guidance/45cfr46.htm#46.102>

## INQUIRIES

For additional information about these guidelines as they relate to extramural programs, consult the NIH Conference Grant Website, at  
<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/r13/index.htm>, to contact the appropriate NIH staff person.

For additional information about these guidelines as they relate to intramural programs, consult

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